

# **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Research Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Monterey Bay Aquarium Ocean View conference Room**

**March 25, 1994 - 0830 to 1230 hrs**

## **Member Attendees**

Greg Cailliet, Moss Landing Marine Labs - RAC Chairman  
Andrew DeVogelaere, ESNERR and Foundation  
Laura Ehret, Naval Postgraduate School  
Gary Greene, USGS  
Les Strnad, CA Coastal Commission  
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium  
Jim Harvey, Moss Landing Marine Labs  
Deborah Johnston, CA Dept of Fish and Game / Monterey  
Aaron King, Monterey Bay NMS - RAC Executive Coordinator  
Donald Potts, UCSC  
Dennis Powers, Hopkins Marine Station  
Bruce Robison, MBARI (Represented by Francisco Chavez)  
Jan Roletto, GFNMS  
Jim Rote, NOAA/OCRM (Represented by Steven Clark)  
Bill Schramm, NOAA/OAB  
Gary Sharp, CIRIOS  
Rick Starr, Univ. of CA, Sea Grant Advisory Program  
Mark Stephenson, CDFG/Marine Pollution Studies Lab  
Mary Yoklavich, NOAA/NMFS/PFEG

## **Guest Attendees**

Donna Myers - AMBAG  
Holly Price - CMC  
Ellen Faurot-Daniels - Friends-of-the-Sea-Otter  
Josh Rovero - NPS  
Patrick Cotter - MBNMS  
David Cripe - Pelagic Shark Research Foundation

## **Members Not In Attendance**

Terry Jackson, Manager, Monterey Bay NMS

Greg Cailliet, RAC Chair, introduced the meeting. Quick information items:

Approval of February 11, 1994 Meeting Minutes - Approval made with unanimous consent with one correction made by Les Strnad on use of Alternates of Members.

**Informational vs. Action Items for RAC consideration (Cailliet) -**

The Chair will try to separate informational and discussion type items on the agenda in order to reduce the amount of time the RAC spends on items that could be more properly referred to a subcommittee. Suggestion made by Gary Sharp that some items could/should be summarized in writing when possible.

#### **Letter sent to Chris Harrold -**

This letter expressed the MBNMS's and the RAC's appreciation for their donation of space and half the budget for meeting refreshments; Terry Jackson has decided to pay the other half of the refreshment bill from the MBNMS's budget; The Chair expresses its gratitude for these donations. Chris Harrold states that if we could raise a little more money we could add pastries to the refreshments.

#### **RAC Membership -**

Letter sent from the MBNMS Manager and the RAC Chair inviting the Morro Bay Foundation to nominate a representative to the RAC; Aaron explains that the Foundation has received and appreciates the RAC's invitation, but has not yet discussed the issue.

#### **USFWS Contact -**

As requested by the RAC to get a USFWS contact, Craig Faanes was contacted by Aaron King after the meeting and agreed to be the contact for the USFWS if that was acceptable to the RAC. Does the RAC need an actual member from the USFWS? Who would we now get, since the USFWS has recently had its research arm split off in the form of the National Biological Survey. Aaron was requested by the Chair to consult with the Interior Department to let them decide if they should/want to have a RAC member, and to find out what type of work they are doing in the area of the Sanctuary.

#### **AAAS Meeting on Sanctuary Research Activities -**

The Chair apologized for not informing the Sanctuary staff prior to attending and presenting a research paper at the San Francisco AAAS meetings. All parties presenting Sanctuary research should attempt to better communicate with the RAC and Sanctuary staff in the future.

#### **Update of ICM Process (Pat Cotter)-**

Core Group met on the 14 of March. Several working agreements came out of this meeting, along with several sub-groups of the Core Group to deal with particular issues. Problem of US EPA participation was particularly distressing to the Core Group. Publishing a summary of the recently held ICM Workshop is progressing. There was also talk of hiring a full-time, two-year position to coordinate the process that is being derived from the ICM process. Let Pat know if anyone wants to get on the ICM mailing list. Pat responded to a question by giving a short synopsis of the ICM purpose and mission. Les Strnad pointed out that this is part of a process to satisfy a 1990 amendment to the CZM legislation requiring a program be instituted to deal with nonpoint water pollution.

#### **Research Symposium Topic (Yoklavich/Starr/Cailliet) -**

Mary announced that the Symposium Subcommittee had met, and after discussing the 6 topics suggested by the RAC at the last meeting, came up with a topic, "Perspectives on Fishery Habitat Quality." With several subtopics possible including:

- Salmon Oceanography,
- Historical Perspectives on Fisheries,
- Fisheries and Satellite Oceanography,
- Nearshore Fisheries and Habitats, and
- Deepwater Benthic Fisheries and Habitats.

Some discussion ensued on how to further utilize the posters that are produced for a symposium. Ideas included: picking the top three and sending them on a tour; making an extended abstract publication; pressing a CD ROM of the posters; having the poster session broken into categories; and having a prize offered for the "best" poster. Chris Harrold suggested that it might be possible to use some area within the Aquarium for a rotating display of posters. The Chair referred this discussion back to the subcommittee.

#### **Update on LMER and Coastal Ocean Program (DeVogelaere) -**

It has been decided to develop a series of 1/2 day workshops on Elkhorn Slough, with topics such as Ecosystem Overview, Hydrology, Secondary Production, etc., with the result being a publication which will be the basis for a LMER proposal next year.

The chair opened the floor to a general discussion on how the committee can be kept better informed of RFPs for funding. The general feeling was that the sooner the RAC can be informed, the better it will be for everyone. Francisco Chavez discussed a potential OSPR project in Monterey Bay. The Chair asked for an update on this at the next RAC meeting. Bill Schramm announces there is an RFP out on a Partnership Project in the NOS.

Several local entities have gotten together and submitted a proposal to centralize some data, such as that being discussed for GIS.

#### **New comments/discussion re: site characterization RFP for Monterey Bay NMS (Cailliet/King) -**

Still nothing new; Washington says it will take about a month, and should be out at the end of April.

#### **Update on Sanctuary GIS (Sharp and Meyers) -**

CCC is getting started. AMBAG is purchasing equipment now and it should be here in about 10 weeks. It should then be up and running about two weeks after that. The project is intended to perform such jobs as modeling of non-point source water pollution. Elkhorn Slough is intended to be the pilot project for this GIS. The Chair suggests that the Sanctuary should be the focal point of all these GIS to ensure there is no duplication of effort, etc. Les Strnad described how the Elkhorn Slough study was designed to get at the problems integrating GIS information.

#### **UCSC Proposal for Genetic/Systematic Facility (Potts) -**

Don Potts passed around a written summary of the project. This is a proposal to NSF to fund several pieces of expensive Genetic/Systematic equipment that would be based at UC Santa Cruz, but could be used by numerous researchers on a cooperating basis. Interest in cooperating in this project has come from MLML, MBARI, MBA and some private organizations.

#### **Volunteer Monitoring Programs (Cailliet) -**

The Chair brought up the discussion of voluntary monitoring programs within the Sanctuary. Consulting the RAC could add significant validity and worthwhileness to such surveys before they're initiated. Standards for surveys should even be included as an amendment to the next version of the Research Plan. Some concern was expressed about the level of interference that we should get involved with telling researchers about how they should be doing their research. In general though, the RAC felt it should be consulted about projects that are intended to monitor the Sanctuary, or to use the Sanctuary as a rationale for the project.

#### **Mitchell Bill (King) -**

Handout given, and a note was made that Judith Conner, with MBARI, is very knowledgeable about the Bill. She is willing to come to a future meeting and talk about it.

## **Break**

## **Long Discussion Items -**

### **ATOC (Acoustical Thermometry of Oceanic Climate) - (Aaron)-**

King began the discussion by describing what had occurred to date with regard to permits necessary to conduct the ATOC project. Note was made by Pat Cotter of the need to follow the NEPA process closely on this project.

Josh Rovero (who stated that he was not here representing ATOC, and was not employed by ATOC, but was only very knowledgeable about the project and wanted to help the RAC in its analysis of the situation) gave a brief summary of the ATOC project's physics, assumptions, theories and goals (written statement passed out, attached). Several questions were asked and answered by Josh. The Chair thanked Mr. Rovero for his explanation.

Holly Price then followed with a summary of the conservation community's concerns with this project. There are two factors in their concern: a) Is the project environmentally harmful or not. There seems to be disagreement on this by the scientific community which the conservation community is concerned with. The conservation community, particularly the CAC, would like to see a pilot project done first whose objective would be to make environmental determinations. b) Why was the local community not notified thru the RAC or the CAC?

Jim Harvey then gave a discussion of the scientific debate/discussion with regard to the marine mammal issue of ATOC. Jim stressed that this issue is not one that has just hit the marine mammal scientific community, but has been discussed, debated and analyzed by the scientific community for several years now. Jim also stressed that it is hard to know what is going to become a debated issue in the marine mammal field. Jim stated that it is reasonable to believe that someone could make an issue of his harbor seal tagging efforts. Jim then went on to discuss some of the reasonable conservation concerns with regard to marine mammals, and possible design alterations that could be made to alleviate them. Finally, Jim gave an overview of the monitoring program that is being proposed to study the effects of ATOC on marine mammals, and what is known about the Heard Island experiment (which Jim admits is little, since those findings have not yet been published).

The talk then turned to a discussion of what the authority of the RAC was to comment on this project. The Chair proposed, and a motion was passed that a subcommittee be formed to: a) monitor the public hearings and review relevant documents; b) make a list of unanswered questions, together with a list of what is known and unknown on the matter; c) see how the permitting process can be impacted by this matter; and d) review the NEPA documents that will be produced. The subcommittee will then submit a report to the RAC. The RAC will then decide how it will advise the SAC on the scientific issues surrounding the project.

The subcommittee was created with Jim Harvey, Jan Roletto, Laura Ehret and Deborah Johnston. The Chair requested Aaron to assist the Subcommittee with any coordination efforts.

### **Prop 132: Marine Research Reserves (Paul Reilly) -**

Paul began by describing how the four Research Reserves were created. He then discussed the associated problems that have been met with in establishing the reserves, such as what would be allowed to take place in them. There is \$800,000 available in this program to fund research within the reserves. This money is expected to be distributed evenly among the four reserves, but as yet the State has not set up any board to review the research proposals.

Paul then focused his talk by describing the four areas that had been designated or proposed for designation (including the Big Creek reserve located within the Sanctuary), and what the criteria that were used to make these decisions.

CDFG will be doing some studies in the various reserves. In the Big Creek reserve, they will be doing some transects to determine fish stock fluctuations.

### **Rest of Meeting -**

The Chair then asked the RAC what could be still accomplished within the next few minutes on the Agenda.

The Chair proposed, and there was no dissension, that the Potter Report review be postponed. Andrew DeVoglaere then moved that the Moss Landing harbor discussion could be scratched from the Agenda, since his concerns of Sanctuary permit review had been discussed under the ATOC issue. Pat Cotter suggested that the RAC take an interest in the proposal to make Moss Landing Harbor a model site for future harbor dredging scenarios, as is being proposed by the Moss Landing Harbormaster.

## **Research Permit Subcommittee Report / Status of Research**

### **Permit Guidelines Review -**

Les Strnad gave a report stating how the Permit Subcommittee had met with the Sanctuary staff, along with Charlie Wahle from Washington. In this discussion it was decided that Helen Golde would set up a list of concerns that the Sanctuary office would have to be worried about when a Institutional Permitting system is put into place. When this list is submitted, the RAC will be informed. It was requested that the exact nature of the purpose of the Sanctuary Permits be described and that the role of the RAC in the permit review process be analyzed.

### **Research Database on EcoNet (Sharp/King) -**

Gary described the programs that were available for people to get started with EcoNet. Aaron made announcement that there was a video available, along with a tutorial that would simulate an online EcoNet session. To borrow these see Aaron.

### **Discussion on the Relationship of the RAC to the SAC -**

(At the last meeting, the Chair raised the issue of how the RAC would like to be formally represented on the SAC. What issues from the RAC should be taken to the SAC?) The Chair was asked to request from the SAC what it would like from the SAC. The Chair was also asked to very strongly push at the SAC meeting that it use all of its influence to see that a new full-time Research Coordinator is designated ASAP.

### **New Business -**

Aaron gave a brief Permit Report stating what was in the works, or on the horizon, with regard to permitting activities, including: a fireworks policy, the Chocolate Abalone dive, and the Pelagic Shark Research Foundation.

NEXT RAC MEETING: Friday, April 22, 8:30-12, in the Ocean View Conference Room of the Monterey Bay Aquarium.

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